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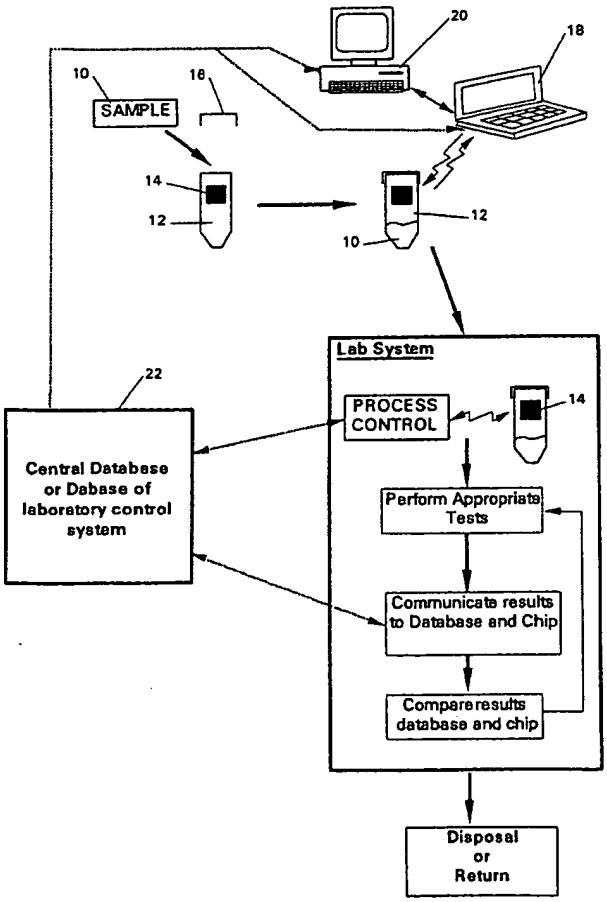
(54) Title: SAMPLE TRACKING SYSTEMS



(57) Abstract: A method of tracking and controlling the passage of samples through test procedures, which comprising the follwing steps. Introducing a sample (10) into a sample carrier (12) provided with a memory chip (14) that can store and provide tat that can be retrieved wirelessly. Programming sample specific data, such as the origin of the sample and the tests to be done, onto the chip (14). Introdicing the sample carrier and sample to testing appratus with chip reading means, and then elelctronically reading data on the chip (14). Performing appropriate processing and sorting on the sample. Loading at least partial details concerning the tests onto the memory chip (14) and finally using the sample specific data to return the test results and other data to a person who requested the test. The invention also includes sample carriers for use with such a method.

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IPC 7 G01N35/02

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
IPC 7 G01N

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)
EPO-Internal, WPI Data, PAJ

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category °	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	DE 196 21 179 A (NONNENMACHER KLAUS) 27 November 1997 (1997-11-27)	1-8,12, 13, 17-20, 24,25, 27, 29-32,37
Y	column 2, line 17 -column 5, line 62 figure 1	28,33-36

Y	US 3 656 473 A (SODICKSON LESTER A ET AL) 18 April 1972 (1972-04-18) column 1, line 4 -column 1, line 12 column 1, line 39 -column 2, line 8 column 2, line 29 -column 2, line 38 column 3, line 1 -column 3, line 67 figures 1-4	33-36

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[X] Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

[X] Patent family members are listed in annex.

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Name and mailing address of the ISA	Authorized officer
European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL – 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016	Koch, A

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
Y	US 5 525 304 A (MATSSON PER ET AL) 11 June 1996 (1996-06-11) column 1, line 5 -column 1, line 20 column 4, line 23 -column 4, line 63 figures 3,4	28
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